Acceptance of 'Right to Food' as Fundamental Right by NHRC

†791. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agree with the National Human Rights Commission's decision of accepting 'Right to Food' as a fundamental right; if so, whether Government would like to take action at the earliest in this regard; and

(b) if so, details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor and how Government propose to fulfil the right to food keeping in view the starvation deaths?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) and (b) The National Human Rights Commission in its proceedings dated 17th January, 2003, following the Supreme Court order dated 26th July, 1997 requiring the Commission to inquire into the starvation deaths in the Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi (KBK) Districts of Orissa and submit a report to the Supreme Court, took into consideration the various submissions made to it including that of the 'Right to Food'.

While the Commission expressed satisfaction with regard to the steps taken by the Government, it also suggested periodical review and regular monitoring of the Schemes to ensure, *inter alia*, food for those most in need of it. The National Human Rights Commission has also observed that the 'Right to Food' is inherent to a life with dignity. The above report of the National Human Rights Commission has been submitted to the Supreme Court in pursuance of the order of the Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 42/97 dated 28th April, 1997 and 26th July, 1997. In order to increase food availability to Below the Poverty Line families the scale of issue of foodgrains has been increased to 35 kg. per family per month, with effrect from Ist April, 2002. For the one crore, poorest of the poor, families "Antyodaya Anna Yojana" was launched in December, 2000 wherein 35 kg. of food grains are being supplied at a highly subsidized price of Rs.2 per kilogram for wheat and Rs.3 per kilogram for rice. In addition, 5311040 MTs of rice and 2579860 MTs of wheat have so far been allocated to the States under the 'Sampuran Gramin Rojgar Yojna'

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(SGRY) and the Special Component of the SGRY (till 11th February, 2003).

More power sought by Nagaland

792. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Nagaland has sought more powers under Article 371-A of the Constitution during peace talks held in the 2nd week of January, 2003 with the Centre; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) Peace Talks were held during the month of January, 2003 between the representatives of the Government of India and the NSCN(IM). During the discussions, NSCN(IM) raised among other issues, their demands relating to the district identity of the Nagas and their stand on unification of Naga areas. There was an agreement to continue the formal talks until a lasting settlement is reached. Meanwhile, both sides reaffirmed the need for a peaceful, violence-free environment.

It would not be in public interest to disclose the further details.

Deputation of CISF Personnel to Protect VIPs

793. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to depute Central Industrial Security Force personnel to protect VIPs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether they have been given enough training to deal with situations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The security of VIPs is the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UT administration. However, it has been decided that wherever central assistance is required for protection of VIP protectees, CISF shall be the designated force.